

Apprentice

by Bunny-mama

Category: Naruto

Genre: Adventure, Romance

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2016-04-13 15:14:09

Updated: 2016-04-13 15:14:09

Packaged: 2016-04-27 17:42:27

Rating: T

Chapters: 1

Words: 2,392

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: When Tsunade finally ascends into the Hokage's Office, her pink-haired second apprentice throws a huge wrench in the normal life in Konoha. AU. Sakura x Sasuke

Apprentice

When Sakura entered the gates of Konoha, she was apprehensive. Through her short thirteen years of life, she had never been in a shonobi village â€" her shishou forbid it. While Tsunade kept Shizune close as she travelled from town to town to gamble, she hid Sakura a distance away to keep her out of harm's way â€" from both friend and foe.

'_The less people know, the more protected you are.'_

Unable to keep in her awe, Sakura's emerald orbs widen as the expanse of the village began to assault her eyes from all sides. The two shinobi men bowed as her shishou entered, their eyes curiously trailed to her after they passed over Shizune.

Feeling her cheeks flush, Sakura ducked behind her long curtain of pink hair. Tucking her hands in the long sleeves of her red kimono, she dutifully followed the sound of her mentor's footsteps. Though she still felt their gaze on her back, her curiosity won over her bashfully demeanor â€" her eyes greedily digested the sights in front of her.

Children rushed the streets with yells of joy, many merchants lined the streets with goods. As the light of the sun warming the bustling road in front of her, Sakura almost couldn't contain her excitement as her shishou's tales of childhood seemingly came to life with each step she took.

Though the streets were cobbled, it was obvious that the village hidden in the leaves was prosperous. Many delicious scents enticed her as she continued to follow behind Shizune, the sights almost made

her falter in her usually surefooted steps.

Eventually they reached a big red building with two elders standing off to the side of the entrance. Their gait slowed until they were at a full stop in front of the older man and woman, who gave them a stiff nod in acknowledgment.

"Tsunade-hime, it was about time you came back," the man gruffly commented.

"Yes, about time you became an asset for the village again instead of frolicking and disgracing the First Lord Hokage's name," the woman sniffed in distaste.

Sakura stared at the elders with obvious shock, her face was one of pure horror. Did they not know about her shishou's infamous temper? She's surprised that her mentor hasn't already punted them across the village for their words!

"Close your mouth, Sakura. Shizune, introduce her."

Seeing the look in her mentor's eyes, Sakura quickly recomposed herself. Pasting on a polite smile, Sakura bowed her head in respect while Shizune introducing her to the elders, "Esteemed Elders, this is Sakura Haruno. She is Tsunade- shishou's second apprentice."

Neither elders bothered to verbally reply and just offered her a stiff nod in response. Their eyes lingered on her in uncertainty before they turned back to Tsunade.

"Why does she not introduce herself?" the question hung in the air for a moment.

Quirking a blonde eyebrow, Tsunade simply replied, "Sakura is mute."

A period of awkward silence followed with her revelation before the two elders composed themselves with a cough.

"Yesâ€¦.Well,c

ome along, hime. We have much to prepare before your inauguration ceremony," the female elder finally ordered while turning away. As Tsunade began to follow the two, Shizune could only offer her a sheepish smile as both apprentices fell into step behind their mistress.

"GRANNY!"

When the door of the Hokage mansion crashed open, Sakura could only blink as an orange blur flew past her towards her mistress sitting by the window. Though she was never formally trained, her hard-wired ninja instincts had her in front of Tsunade with a kunai against the loud offender's neck before he had even reached the desk.

Tsunade watched with a bored expression, her face resting on one of her hands. After a few seconds of silence, she eventually ordered, "Stand down, Sakura. It's just an idiot."

Turning back to give Tsunade a funny look, Sakura lowered her weapon and returned the kunai to the back of her obi. She began to shuffle away until a head of blonde hair was shoved into her face.

"Who's this, Granny?! She's cute!" the mop of blonde yelled right into her. Sakura furrowed her eyebrows as she finally understood the meaning behind shishou's previous words.

"That is my apprentice, Naruto," Tsunade sighed.

"Eh?! But I thought Shizune was your apprentice!"

Sakura nervously shuffled back as the pitch of Naruto's voice only became higher, the grimace clearly expressed her opinion to the room.

"I can have more than one apprentice, you idiot," Tsunade huffed before dismissively waving her hand, "Anyways, what do you want?"

As the mop of blonde stepped back, Sakura could finally make out some facial features. The boy was around her age, though a bit shorter than her. He was tanned; his cheeks adorned with scratches that looked like whiskers. Though most of the time his eyes were narrowed into cat-like slits, Sakura spied the bright cerulean orbs hidden behind the lids.

"Ah, Konohamaru locked himself in the Hokage office, Granny!" Naruto yelled with gusto, "No matter what anyone does, he won't come out!"

"Why should I care?" Tsunade deadpanned, her eyes blankly trained on the exuberant blonde.

Naruto began sputtering, "Because if he's in there, you can't get in there!"

Tsunade rolled her hazel eyes before asking, "And?"

Naruto's excitement seemed to fall at Tsunade's lack of interest, his voice quieter now, "I mean, I guess you don't need to be in thereâ€¦"

As his last sentence trailed off, a sudden spark come back in his eyes as a thought passed through his head. It wasn't long until he began yelling again.

"You promised to fix Bushy-Brows, Grandma!" his loud voice was back as he almost began bounce, "C'mon!"

To Sakura's amusement, Tsunade actually let herself get pulled by Naruto while he cajoled her. The emerald orbs danced with laughter as she watched both of the blondes' antics. Dutifully, she followed behind the striking pair to the hospitalâ€" after all, she is a loyal apprentice to the Fifth Hokage.

When she had arrived to the room of Naruto's proclaimed "Bushy Brows", Sakura felt sorrow. Lying in the bed with hopeful eyes was a boy a little older than her and she felt her heart clench as his eyes dimmed with each one of her shishou's words.

"What do you mean, granny?" Naruto bellowed in disbelief, "You can't do anything?!"

"I-I," Lee stuttered, his eyebrows furrowed in distress before he sank himself deeper into the pillow, "I do not understand."

The boy's teacher had stormed out in anger, his denial of the situation was normal.

With every passing moment of silence, it seemed like the boy spiritually died more and more as the clock ticked each second of time.

Unable to control herself anymore, stepped out from behind Tsunade. With everyone's eyes curiously watching her, Sakura slowly walked to hospital bed and placed her glowing hands over Lee's chest.

She knew that if there wasn't something Tsunade could do, the possibility of her doing anything was beyond small in percentage. But she also knew that she wouldn't be able to forgive herself if she didn't even try.

She felt her chakra travel through his body as she continued her reconnaissance of his injuries. She conjured up in her mind's eye an exact map of his body and replicated the injuries. As the picture got clearer and clearer, the frown on her face deepened. Every single one of his bones were broken, practically all of the ligaments were torn. Many of his neurons were sluggishly firing as they were damaged – even his kidneys had a hard time just filtering his body's limited waste.

This was a devastating case, it was almost like the case where the Second and the First Hokage-

Without finishing, Sakura quickly returned to her shishou's side. Her green eyes were wide with an epiphany dancing against her mind. She excitedly began to sign - the gestures were frantic, almost to the point where Tsunade couldn't decipher them. However, a look of realization came over her face as Sakura's suggestion finally registered in her mind.

Tsunade took a moment to think it through, her eyes hard.

"There is one option," she finally admitted, "but I don't want to keep your hopes up.

"I will do anything to recover, Tsunade-sama!" The boy declared to the room, "Even if I have to run a thousand laps around the perimeter or Konoha or do two thousand push-ups!"

"That's the spirit, Bushy-brows!" Naruto cheered supportively.

"We can pursue surgery," Tsunade started before pausing. Both boys whooped in excitement. The older ninja that looked like a full-sized version of Lee peered back inside, his previous moment of anger at Tsunade almost forgotten.

"Are you sure, Tsunade-sama?" Lee's teacher inquired as he stepped back into the room, his eyes filled with hope.

"But his chances of surviving are slim. Full recovery even slimmer," Tsunade stiffly replied, her eyes not leaving the prone boy before meeting his eyes, "It is your choice. There is no shame of retiring from being a ninja."

Lee deflated a little with this new knowledge and Sakura felt her heart clench again. However, within the minute, he looked back up at her shishou with a renewed fire in his eyes and in a determined voice "I" he promised, "I will never give up on my dreams! That is my way of the ninja!"

Seeing the approving look on her shishou's face and the stubborn glint in Lee's, Sakura couldn't help but let her eyes swim with genuine happiness for a moment.

"I

"Sakura, I need a book out of the Hokage's office for the surgery. Retrieve it for me."

Without further clarification, Sakura began to walk towards the Hokage tower with purpose. She was determined to make sure Lee got his fair chance of his dream.

"But how is she supposed to get in?! Konohamaru is still in there!" Naruto wailed from behind her, "I know because I have been trying all morning!"

Sakura scrunched up her face in confusion as she continued to walk. For the life of her, she doesn't understand why or mainly, how, Naruto was a ninja. Aren't ninjas supposed to be silent and stealthy? You could hear Naruto coming from a village away!

"Shut up, Idiot. Sakura can take care of herself," Tsunade snapped before adding with pride, "After all, she is my apprentice."

Sakura felt a proud smile on her own face with her mentor's admission. Though she basically was just a little stray cat Tsunade had picked up on her gambling journey, her shishou put a lot of faith into her. It would literally kill her to disappoint her mistress so Sakura always made it a point to be precise and accurate.

"But his traps are really good, Grandma! Sakura is so small and cute, she'll get mauled!" his cries were beginning to give her a migraine.

"Why don't you follow her to make sure she's okay?" Tsunade suggested almost sarcastically, "Though I have a feeling she'll probably end up protecting you instead, short-stuff."

"HEY!"

"I

"Ne, Sakura-chan!" Naruto began before quietly asking, "Is it okay if I call you that?"

Sakura gave him a polite smile and a small nod.

"Why don't you ever talk?"

Sakura turned to look at him while she continued to walk, her head tilted to the side.

"Well you're even quieter than Hinata-chan!" Naruto continued with a nervous laugh, "And she's super quiet!" He made sure to emphasize the word "super".

Blinking, she signed to the blonde: I'm mute.

Naruto only gave her an odd look, he didn't understand her. Was she making hand-signs?

Oh!

"It's a jutsu!" Naruto proclaimed, he had full confidence in his conclusion, "I bet it's like some mermaid-jutsu, right? Chakra siren-singing of DEATH!"

Unsure on how she could correct him, Sakura could only offer him a blank stare.

Naruto tucked his hands behind his head as he continued to walk, "I bet your voice is so beautiful, you can just suggest people into killing each other. Man, what a great jutsu â€" no wonder, Granny probably forces you to be silent!"

Sakura's eyes only showed incredulity.

The blond bowed his head lower, blue eyes filled with mischief before he asked, "Are you a real mermaid? Is that why your hair is pink?"

Unable to really process his thoughts, Sakura let out a silent laugh as joyful tears filled her eyes. What a ridiculous idea!

Shaking her head with a smile, Sakura jerked her head towards the tower. They should hurry. The day was ending soon.

â€|.

"Konohamaru has it all barricaded and there's no way anyone can get in!" Naruto warned with a fury of hand motions, "The guards have been at it all day!" He pointed at the very exhausted men from the guard tower that had greeted her shishou.

Understanding that she needed the book in her shishou's hand as quickly as possible, Sakura shrugged off Naruto's words. She was not only Tsunade's apprentice of medical arts.

Without batting an eyelash, Sakura stepped up to the grand wooden doors before pushing them open with ease. The huge pile of furniture screeched a terrible sound as they were all moved to the side quickly.

A huge metal pan fell towards her, she brushed it to the side like it was a fly. A shower of senbon needles flew at her, she grabbed every single one before dropping them to the ground. Sakura anticipated the three smoke bombs and she simply picked up the solid oak table next

to her to shield herself before flicking it to the side.

"H-Hey!" a small child yelled at her, his pudgy finger pointed at her accusingly.

Without sparing him a glance, Sakura leaned over to carefully inspected the bookshelf her mentor had mentioned briefly the day of their arrival. Finding the title that matched the area of the surgery Tsunade would be heading, Sakura carefully grabbed it before nonchalantly turning around. Flipping it open, she began to scan the pages quickly. Though she's typically very humble, she couldn't help the small smirk as she left both Naruto and the pudgy-fingered boy slack-jawed in the Hokage tower. The two guards' previously curious watch were now intently attached to her back as she walked away.

Sakura sniffed. She _is _Tsunade-sama's apprentice â€" a tigress in training, not just some kitten waving her paws.

End
file.